

# Every Child Learning Every Day



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An early childhood newsletter from the State Department of Education

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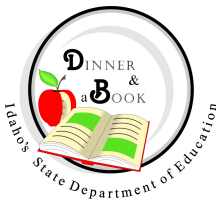
## READY TO LEARN

### Books build vocabulary

By Dr. Stan Steiner

This month we have included some great concept books for vocabulary development, social skills, and flexing the imagination.

**"Cinco Monitos: Five Little Monkeys,"** by Eileen Christelow, 1989/2005, Clarion Books. Pre K. This classic story about five little mischievous monkeys jumping on the bed is perfect for teaching preschoolers another language in context.



**"Dad, Aren't You Glad?,"** by Lynn Plourde, 2005, Dutton. As any parent knows, youngsters like to help out with the tasks around the house. Of course they have unique ways of doing these chores. This book will help audiences see the fun side of helping hands.

**"Farm/Zoo/Lift the Flap Colors,"** St. Martin's Press, 2005. These wonderful concept board books are part of a set designed for infants in the teething stage of development. As your child advances in book handling skills the lift-the-flap book introduction to colors is superb.

**"Teeth Are Not for Biting,"** by Elizabeth Verdick, 2003. Free Spirit Publishing. Parents and daycare providers can relate to issues of biting among their youngsters. This well written book offers a good approach to tackling the problem. Also look for her book about hitting, **"Hands Are Not for Hitting."**

Dr. Stan Steiner, is the chairman of the Boise State University's Department of Literacy. He can be reached via email at [stan-steiner@boisestate.edu](mailto:stan-steiner@boisestate.edu).

## Appreciate the decisions you make

Dear Reader:

May brings our nation's annual celebration of mothers. Much can be said to extol the virtue of mothers, but I'd like to use this short space to ask mothers to pause and celebrate the decisions you have made.

One of the most challenging choices for mothers is whether to work outside the home when children are young.

The reality for many, many families is that there is no choice, both parents must work in order to provide for the needs of their families.

For those who can entertain making this choice, you face critics on both sides.

On a regular basis studies are released that vilify moms who work, blaming them for a variety of societal problems.

Other reports depict stay-at-home mom's as women trapped in a drudgery of crying babies and household



Dr. Marilyn Howard  
Superintendent of Public Instruction

chores.

Sometimes this debate feels like a smokescreen to avoid quality discussions about providing living wages, quality day care, and

preschool services.

What is the right choice for families? That's not a question that can be answered by a national study, but rather it is answered in the home of every family.

So the next time a headline screams about the faults of the choices mothers make, don't let it induce feelings of guilt.

Instead take a moment to appreciate how your decision enhances your life and the lives of your children.

Sometimes we forget that along with all their other needs, children also need moms and dads who are healthy and happy. Part of that happiness is feeling that time spent working at home or outside of it is meaningful.

*Marilyn Howard*

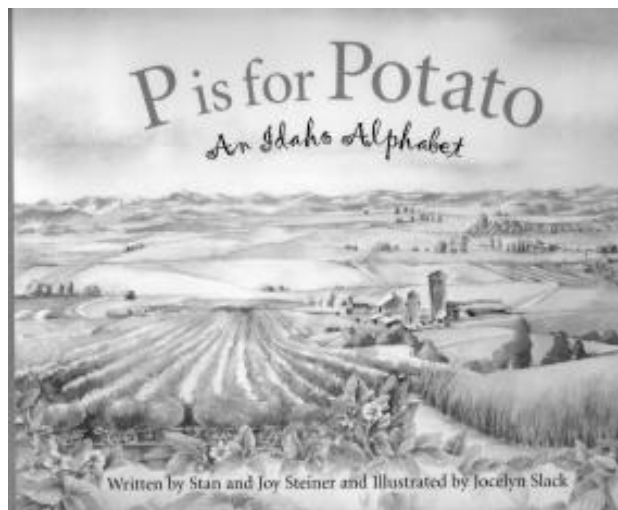
## READY TO LEARN

### Idahoans author new alphabet book for kids

Continuing the great "Discover American State By State" series is "P is for Potato: An Idaho Alphabet."

This Sleeping Bear Press book written by Stan and Joy Steiner and illustrated by Jocelyn Stack explores the lush land and rich history of a state so often overlooked.

Kids of all ages will love the A-to-Z rhymes boasting about all the riches found within Idaho's borders — from the Appaloosa steed to the zinc mines to Mount Borah, to, the potato.



Every page expands on the rhyme and introduces the readers to more interesting facts, places and people that have helped make Idaho the unique treasure it is.

Lyrically written by Idaho's own husband and wife team, Stan and Joy Steiner, "P is for Potato" excels through the love and knowledge of their home state. The text comes dancing to brilliant life behind the talented strokes of illustrator — and Idaho native — Jocelyn Stack's brush. "P is for Potato: An Idaho Alphabet," is as unique as Idaho itself. It's rare to

find a children's book on our 43rd state, but it's a great discovery.

For more information visit: <http://www.sleepingbearpress.com/>



## RESOURCES

### Mental health services available

Caring for children is not easy. Parents, caregivers, and school personnel have serious responsibilities. If a child has a broken bone, he will need to go to the doctor. If he is receiving poor grades, he may need a tutor. But what if he is becoming increasingly sad or angry?

Your child could be experiencing stress or emotional problems.

More than 17,000 children in Idaho are affected by serious emotional problems that hinder them from doing well at school, home and in your community. Some indicators are:

- Sadness much of the time
- Constant fear
- Inability to focus on tasks
- Angry outbursts

#### Helping Idaho Families

In communities throughout Idaho, people are coming together to help children with mental or emotional problems make life's journey a little easier through a "System of Care."

Each community's System of Care is made up of individuals from public and private agencies, including mental health workers, parent advocates, and school representatives.

Families work within their 'system of care' to develop a plan that draws upon programs and services available in the community, based on their strengths.

#### Finding help

With help, children can enjoy good mental health as well as physical health. If you think your child has a problem, you can contact:

Idaho Careline, which provides free referrals to community services by calling 2-1-1 or 1-800-926-2588 or

Idaho Federation of Families for Children's Mental Health. 1-800-905-3436.

## NUTRITION

### Summer programs provide food for children

Did you know your young children can enjoy a breakfast, snack, or lunch at no charge this summer? The United States Department of Agriculture reimburses schools, churches, and other community organizations to provide free meals to children during the summer.



Meals are free to children under the age of 18. There are no income requirements and no sign-in sheets.

The meals are based on the Dietary Guidelines for Americans and provide protein, energy, vitamins, and minerals your child needs to learn, grow and play.

Most sites provide one or more meals or snacks.

Breakfast may include cereal, fruit, and milk, or hot foods such as pancakes or French toast sticks.

Lunches and suppers may include foods such as a turkey sandwich, a chicken quesadilla, or pepperoni pizza. Fruit and vegetables and milk always part of these lunches offered.

Snacks will be made up of two items such as milk and fruit, or peanut butter and crackers.

Summer sites vary, but typically they are in local community gathering places, such as schools (both elementary and secondary), parks, and community centers and other areas familiar to your child. Often, sites have summer activities in which your child may wish to participate.

To find a summer program near you, call the State Department of Education at (208) 332-6821 or dial 211, Idaho's Care Line.

## READY TO LEARN

### Learning to write requires access to tools

The first steps in learning to write involve exposure to the tools of writing. Parents can help build those skills in their children by providing tools, materials, and time to practice and play.

**Birth to 1 year** — Provide your baby safe toys to grip such as rattles. Write letters and shapes with your finger in spilled baby food or on baby's belly, legs and arms during baths.

**1 to 3 years old** — Show your child how to write letters in dirt or sand with their fingers or sticks. Supervise them while they try. Another easy activity is water painting. Provide your child with a bucket of water and a kid-sized paintbrush and let

them paint a fence, sidewalk, or your house.

**3 to 5 years old** — Again with supervision, provide paper or scraps and tools like large crayons for scribbling. A great source of scrap paper is junk mail. Demonstrate how to draw simple shapes, letters and numbers for your child describing the actions as you do them.

**Books & other resources** — "Writing Letters a to Z: Preschool-Kindergarten (Star Wars Fun-To-Learn Books)," by Car Pagliano-Martin and "The Little Hands Art Book/Exploring Arts & Crafts With 2-To 6-Year-Olds," by Judy Press.

## HEALTH

### Immunization requirements changing

The immunization requirements for preschoolers and kindergarten students are changing for the 2005-06 school year.

The change was approved by the 2005 Legislature and involves additional doses of the diphtheria, tetanus, and pertussis (DTaP) vaccine and the measles, mumps, and rubella (MMR) vaccine.

Beginning with 2005-06, all children entering preschool and kindergarten will be required to have a minimum of:

- 5 doses of DTaP (change from 4)
- 2 doses of MMR (change from 1)
- 3 doses of polio (no change)
- 3 doses of hepatitis B (no change)

Parents may also file an exemption for citing a valid medical or religious exemption form. (An ex-

emption is not valid if the parent has forgotten their child's immunization records.)

State law requires a parent, custodian, or guardian of any child who is to attend any public, private, or parochial school in Idaho to provide proof of required immunizations before attendance; children who are not in compliance must be excluded.

New forms have been created for preschools and schools and are available at <http://iris.idhw.state.id.us>. For more information call 1 (208) 334-5931.

Parents who need copies of their child's immunization records can contact their physician or the health district where they lived when their child received the shots.